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STATE FOR MCC
AMEMBASSY BRIDGETOWN PASS TO AMEMBASSY GRENADA
AMEMBASSY OTTAWA PASS TO AMCONSUL QUEBEC
AMEMBASSY BRASILIA PASS TO AMCONSUL RECIFE

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SUBJECT: Ortega Dismisses OAS and Democratic Charter

CLASSIFIED BY: RobertJCallahan, Ambassador, State, Embassy Managua;
REASON: 1.4(B), (D)

11. (SBU) Summary: In a November 28 speech, President Daniel Ortega described the recent Honduran elections as a political process lacking legi

12. (SBU) On November 28, President Ortega gave a speech at the signing ceremony for a loan from the Inter-American Development Bank (IADB). While his speech began with comments regarding the IADB loan, he ended his remarks by discrediting the November 29 Honduran elections as a "political process meant to legitimize the coup d'etat." "At the end of the day," Ortega stated, "the coup plotters received Washington's blessing" and the Europeans would say "they might be coup plotters, but they're our coup plotters." Ortega said this was "The same phrase Roosevelt used when he said 'Somoza was a son of a bitch, but he was our son of a bitch.'"

13. (SBU) Ortega claimed that with the Honduran elections the Inter-American Democratic Charter was left in "shreds." He said, "There is no longer any Democratic Charter that matters in Latin America. It is more than evident that a declaration from the OAS means nothing. What does this show us? That we can no longer rely on these organizations." Following this argument, Ortega warned the political opposition in Nicaragua not to invoke the Charter for Nicaraguan matters. He said, "With what authority will they [the opposition] place a complaint [before the OAS]? They should not invoke the Democratic Charter ... what Charter? The only option left is to strengthen the democratic charter of each country ("cada pueblo")." He continued, "Whatever circumstances Nicaragua finds itself in, invoking the Democratic Charter will have no value."

14. (C) Comment: This is not the first time that Ortega has criticized the OAS, nor the first time he has blamed the United States for what he views as the organization's failure. What is new, however, is his criticism of the Democratic Charter. Recently, the opposition has begun efforts to present a united front against Ortega's authoritarian tendencies. A week prior to Ortega's speech, Nicaraguan civil society and opposition parties held a protest march to commemorate the one-year anniversary of the 2008 municipal electoral fraud. With his November 28 speech, Ortega appears to discard the opposition's legitimate protests over the election fraud and discredit any international recourse the opposition might seek in the future for human rights violations or anti-democratic actions. In short, Ortega is taking another oratorical step to eliminate any international obstacles to his future political actions.
CALLAHAN